THE VISION : CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapters, an attempt has been made to trace the development of the Jamesian idea of refinement as it is revealed both in the individual novels and also in the organic patterns into which James's creative process organized itself. The theme of refinement and its variations flow from the type of conceptual reality which Henry James had at the very outset recognized as the central fact of his artistic creation. James was primarily interested not in the Protean variety of physical experience, but rather in the deeper experience of intensity, in the truth of human selfhood as it revealed itself in the continuous extension of mental awareness, and in the widening of the frontiers of human consciousness as dramatised in the rhythms of change and growth, adaptation and fulfilment of the human personality. Although in his novels there is a virtual elimination of the physical substrata of individual and social existence, the deliberate renunciation of these factors only contributes to the solidity and the density of the inner life. Convinced of the supremacy of the values of the profounder life of man, Henry James proceeded to enact the omitted possibilities of life in many areas of American and European culture, and in doing so he projected his own fiction as "the uncreated conscience" of his race.

Henry James's artistic instrumentation was perfected to such a point of preciosity that the novel acquired the kind of self-sufficiency, which alone could bear the weight of the moment carrying in itself the fateful contradistinctions of the past and the future, of freedom and necessity, of social manners and individual morals. James's personality and his artistic sensibility were both organically involved in exploring those combinations and approximations of the outer and inner events, which made the centres of life's reality accessible to the individual through the conversion and the

metamorphosis of the facts of conscience into the values of consciousness. Refinement in the individuals and in the complex patterns of culture is, above all, the *elan vital* which keeps this possibility open, and its processes creative. As one looks back at the novels of Henry James as a syntactical progression of his artistic vision of fife/ one becomes aware of the fact that there are certain elements of human experience, and certain modes of human estimation, which clearly define the patterns of growth, and the unification of the Jamesian sensibility*